#### What does it mean to guarantee the right to housing? This topic breeds repetitive mundane discussions of idealic and inapplicable concepts of ‘rights’, health care or god forbid Trump’s economics (if that’s what we’re calling them). Based on the philosophical confines of value debate, we are expected to discuss the pragmatic solutions to this intangible concept of a ‘right to housing’. When debaters get up and read an advocacy it delineates social groups as disadvantaged in their access and they ignore the social reality of housing distribution.

#### Tim Iglesias\* explains that a right to housing must discuss the social expectations and commitments that a federal government has to its marginalized or “marked” bodies. Brianna\* tells a different story, she affirms that as a “Femme Queen free agent in the scene” her ‘right to housing’ looks very different from the narratives placating your previous ballots. To Brianna, “the heteronormative space of the home – of the biological family, and of the heterogendered social and sexual relations – continually reproduces confinement, regulation, and exclusion.”

Citations in order:

\*Iglesias OUR PLURALIST HOUSING ETHICS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR AFFORDABILITY Tim Iglesias\* Professor of Law, University of San Francisco School of Law. Thanks to Fred Bosselman, Josh Davis, Alice Kaswan, Jim Kushner, Mike Rawson, and Josh Rosenberg for helpful comments on an earlier draft. Thanks also to the USF law faculty for comments and suggestions during a work-in-progress presentation. Finally, thanks to Paul Gruwell for research assistance.

\*Marlon M. Bailey is an assistant professor of Gender Studies and American Studies at Indiana University and has received the MLA/GLQ Caucus’s Compton-Noll Prize for best article in LGBTQ Studies, “Engendering space: Ballroom culture and the spatial practice of possibility in Detroit”, 2013, A Journal of Feminist Geography, Vol. 21, No. 4, pp 495-496 //Accessed 3/6/17 GK)

#### Social systems are premised on bodies’ placements within systems of meaning. Comfort is when certain subjects fit in with dominant discursive norms. Heteronormativity relies on a repetition of norms to comfort heterosexual subjects. These repetitions transform and dominate spaces for the heterosexual subject to easily exercise its will. Because queers exist at the margin, they are always positioned as anti-normative and uncomfortable.

Ahmed 04 Sara Ahmed is formerly the director of a new Centre for Feminist Research (CFR) at Goldsmiths, Professor of Race and Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths, and a scholar that writes on the intersection of queer theory, feminist theory, critical race theory, and post-colonialism, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, “The Contingency of Pain”, 2004, Routledge, New York, pp 31-34 //Accessed 9/15/16. page 176-179 KE

Thinking about comfort is hence always a useful starting place for thinking. So let’s think about how it feels to be comfortable. Say you are sinking into a comfortable chair. Note I already have transferred the affect to an object (‘it is comfortable’). But comfort is about the fit between body and object: my comfortable chair may be awkward for you, with your differently- shaped body. Comfort is about an encounter between more than one body, which is the promise of a ‘sinking’ feeling. It is, after all, pain or discomfort that return one’s attention to the surfaces of the body as body (see Chapter 1). To be comfortable is to be so at ease with one’s environment that it is hard to distinguish where one’s body ends and the world begins. One fits, and by fitting, the surfaces of bodies disappear from view. The disappearance of the surface is instructive: in feelings of comfort, bodies extend into spaces, and spaces extend into bodies. The sinking feeling involves a seamless space, or a space where you can’t see the ‘stitches’ between bodies. Heteronormativity functions as a form of public comfort by allowing bodies to extend into spaces that have already taken their shape. Those spaces are lived as comfortable as they allow bodies to fit in; the surfaces of social space are already impressed upon by the shape of such bodies (like a chair that acquires its shape by the repetition of some bodies inhabiting it: we can almost see the shape of bodies as ‘impressions’ on the surface). The impressions acquired by surfaces function as traces of bodies. We can even see this process in social spaces. As Gill Valentine has argued, tthe ‘heterosexualisation’ of public spaces such as streets is naturalized by the repetition of different forms of heterosexual conduct (images on billboards, music played, displays of heterosexual intimacy and so on), a process which goes unnoticed by heterosexual subjects (Valentine 1996: 149). The surfaces of social as well as bodily space ‘record’ the repetition of acts, and the passing by of some bodies and not others. Heteronormativity also becomes a form of comforting: one feels better by the warmth of being faced by a world one has already taken in. One does not notice this as a world when one has been shaped by that world, and even acquired its shape. Norms may not only have a way of disappearing from view, but may also be that which we do not consciously feel.5 Queer subjects, when faced by the ‘comforts’ of heterosexuality may feel uncomfortable (the body does not ‘sink into’ a space that has already taken its shape). Discomfort is a feeling of disorientation: one’s body feels out of place, awkward, unsettled. I know that feeling too well, the sense of out-of-place-ness and estrangement involves an acute awareness of the surface of one’s body, which appears as surface, when one cannot inhabit the social skin, which is shaped by some bodies, and not others. Furthermore, queer subjects may also be ‘asked’ not to make heterosexuals feel uncomfortable by avoiding the display of signs of queer intimacy, which is itself an uncomfortable feeling, a restriction on what one can do with one’s body, and another’s body, in social space.6 The availability of comfort for some bodies may depend on the labour of others, and the burden of concealment. Comfort may operate as a form of ‘feeling fetishism’: some bodies can ‘have’ comfort, only as an effect of the work of others, where the work itself is concealed from view.7 It is hence for very good reasons that queer theory has been defined not only as anti-heteronormative, but as anti-normative. As Tim Dean and Christopher Lane argue, queer theory ‘advocates a politics based on resistance to all norms’ (Deanr and Lane 2001: 7). Importantly, heteronormativity refers to more than simply the presumption that it is normal to be heterosexual. The ‘norm’ is regulative, and is supported by an ‘ideal’ that associates sexual conduct with other forms of conduct. We can consider, for example, how the restriction of the love object is not simply about the desirability of any heterosexual coupling. The couple should be ‘a good match’ (a judgement that often exercises conventional class and racial assumptions about the importance of ‘matching’ the backgrounds of partners) and they should exclude others from the realm of sexual intimacy (an idealisation of monogamy, that often equates intimacy with property rights or rights to the intimate other as property). Furthermore, a heterosexual coupling may only approximate an ideal through being sanctioned by marriage, by participating in the ritual of reproduction and good parenting, by being good neighbours as well as lovers and parents, and by being even better citizens. In this way, normative culture involves the differentiation between legitimate and illegitimate ways of living whereby the preservation of what is legitimate (‘life as we know it’) is assumed to be necessary for the well-being of the next generation. Heteronormativity involves the reproduction or transmission of culture through how one lives one’s life in relation to others.

#### Violence against queers goes beyond just death. Heteronormativity forces queerness into a status of overkill, where excessive violence is a strategy to entirely erase queerness from existence and history.

Stanley 11 Stanley, E. "Near Life, Queer Death: Overkill and Ontological Capture." Social Text 29.2 107 (2011): 1-19. Web.

“He was my son—my daughter. It didn’t matter which. He was a sweet kid,” Lauryn Paige’s mother, trying to reconcile at once her child’s murder and her child’s gender, stated outside an Austin, Texas, courthouse.24 Lauryn was an eighteen-year-old transwoman who was brutally stabbed to death. According to Dixie, Lauryn’s best friend, it was a “regular night.” The two women had spent the beginning of the evening “working it” as sex workers. After Dixie and Lauryn had made about $200 each they decided to call it quits and return to Dixie’s house, where both lived. On the walk home, Gamaliel Mireles Coria and Frank Santos picked them up in their white conversion van. “Before we got into the van the very first thing I told them was that we were transsexuals,” said Dixie in 8 Stanley ∙ Near Life, Queer Death an interview.25 After a night of driving around, partying in the van, Dixie got dropped off at her house. She pleaded for Lauryn to come in with her, but Lauryn said, “Girl, let me finish him,” so the van took off with Lauryn still inside.26 Santos was then dropped off, leaving Lauryn and Coria alone in the van. According to the autopsy report, Travis County medical examiner Dr. Roberto Bayardo cataloged at least fourteen blows to Lauryn’s head and more than sixty knife wounds to her body. The knife wounds were so deep that they almost decapitated her—a clear sign of overkill. Overkill is a term used to indicate such excessive violence that it pushes a body beyond death. Overkill is often determined by the post- mortem removal of body parts, as with the partial decapitation in the case of Lauryn Paige and the dissection of Rashawn Brazell. The temporality of violence, the biological time when the heart stops pushing and pulling blood, yet the killing is not finished, suggests the aim is not simply the end of a specific life, but the ending of all queer life. This is the time of queer death, when the utility of violence gives way to the pleasure in the other’s mortality. If queers, along with others, approximate nothing, then the task of ending, of killing, that which is nothing must go beyond normative times of life and death. In other words, if Lauryn was dead after the first few stab wounds to the throat, then what do the remaining fifty wounds signify? The legal theory that is offered to nullify the practice of overkill often functions under the name of the trans- or gay-panic defense. Both of these defense strategies argue that the murderer became so enraged after the “discovery” of either genitalia or someone’s sexuality they were forced to protect themselves from the threat of queerness. Estanislao Martinez of Fresno, California, used the trans-panic defense and received a four-year prison sentence after admittedly stabbing J. Robles, a Latina transwoman, at least twenty times with a pair of scissors. Importantly, this defense is often used, as in the cases of Robles and Paige, after the murderer has engaged in some kind of sex with the victim. The logic of the trans-panic defense as an explanation for overkill, in its gory semiotics, offers us a way of understanding queers as the nothing of Mbembe’s query. Overkill names the technologies necessary to do away with that which is already gone. Queers then are the specters of life whose threat is so unimaginable that one is “forced,” not simply to murder, but to push them backward out of time, out of History, and into that which comes before.27 In thinking the overkill of Paige and Brazell, I return to Mbembe’s query, “But what does it mean to do violence to what is nothing?”28 This question in its elegant brutality repeats with each case I offer. By resituating this question in the positive, the “something” that is more often than not translated as the human is made to appear. Of interest here, the category of the human assumes generality, yet can only be activated through the Social Text 107 • Summer 2011 9 specificity of historical and politically located intersection. To this end, the human, the “something” of this query, within the context of the liberal democracy, names rights-bearing subjects, or those who can stand as sub- jects before the law. The human, then, makes the nothing not only possible but necessary. Following this logic, the work of death, of the death that is already nothing, not quite human, binds the categorical (mis)recognition of humanity. The human, then, resides in the space of life and under the domain of rights, whereas the queer inhabits the place of compromised personhood and the zone of death. As perpetual and axiomatic threat to the human, the queer is the negated double of the subject of liberal democracy. Understanding the nothing as the unavoidable shadow of the human serves to counter the arguments that suggest overkill and antiqueer violence at large are a pathological b reak and that the severe nature of these killings signals something extreme. In contrast, overkill is precisely not outside of, but is that which constitutes liberal democracy as such. Overkill then is the proper expression to the riddle of the queer nothingness. Put another way, the spectacular material-semiotics of overkill should not be read as (only) individual pathology; these vicious acts must indict the very social worlds of which they are ambassadors. Overkill is what it means, what it must mean, to do violence to what is nothing.

#### This is proven by our legal system: current legislative processes protect gay and trans panic legal defense in court cases, such that IT IS LITERALLY LEGAL TO KILL QUEER AND TRANS PEOPLE FOR NO REASON.

**American Bar Association 2013** (American Bar Association Adopted by the House of Delegates August 12-13, 2013, Resolution <http://lgbtbar.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Gay-and-Trans-Panic-Defenses-Resolution.pdf> )

**The “gay panic” and “trans panic” legal defenses are** surprisingly **long-lived** historical artifacts, remnants of a time when widespread public antipathy was the norm for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (‘LGBT’) individuals. These defenses ask the jury to find that the victim’s **sexual orientation or gender identity is to blame for the defendant’s violent reaction.** They characterize sexual orientation and gender identity as objectively reasonable excuses for loss of self-control, and thereby mitigate a perpetrator’s culpability for harm done to LGBT individuals. By fully or partially **excusing** the perpetrators of **crimes against LGBT victims**, these defenses **enshrine in the law the notion that LGBT lives are worth less**

#### For marked bodies the status of overkill and ontological death becomes only one instance of violence inflicted on them. Discrimination in the housing market inhibits their access to housing option in the first place.

Robert Espinoza (Vice President of Policy at PHI), "LGBT People: Our Longing for Home, Our Right to Housing", The Huffington Post, 02/28/2014, Robert Espinoza (Vice President of Policy at PHI), "LGBT People: Our Longing for Home, Our Right to Housing", The Huffington Post, 02/28/2014, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/robert-espinoza/lgbt-people-our-longing-f_b_4858491.html>

The relationship between aging and housing discrimination forms the subject of a new report from the Equal Rights Center, in partnership with SAGE (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders). Based on an investigation conducted in 10 states, the report finds that 48 percent of older adult testers in same-sex relationships experienced at least one form of differential treatment when seeking housing. Same-sex couples were provided fewer rental options, higher fees, more extensive application requirements and less information regarding financial incentives than opposite-sex couples—barriers likely faced, though insufficiently studied, among the larger, more diverse spectrum of LGBT people. For example, a 2011 national study of nearly 6,500 transgender and gender-nonconforming people found that 19 percent of respondents were denied housing and 11 percent were evicted because they were transgender or gender-nonconforming. For the same reasons, 29 percent were turned away from homeless shelters, and 25 percent and 22 percent were physically and sexually assaulted, respectively, while in a homeless shelter. Queer people too often wager with risk, danger and personal compromise to survive the night—and if achieved, the years that follow. This hardship of finding both home and housing reverberates as a theme across LGBT-rights struggles. The federal government does not explicitly protect against discrimination in housing based on sexual orientation or gender identity, though recent rules, some legal interpretations and a growing number of states and cities are moving toward more protections. Homelessness among queer youth and transgender people remains disproportionately high. Harsh immigration law keeps many queer immigrants from their loved ones abroad. Housing for low-income people with HIV receives scant attention and government support, with some exceptions. And for queer people raised in towns, states and regions that are politically hostile, or which lose their relevance as we mature and evolve, leaving home can leave psychological scars that we’re left to construe in private.

#### And, this violence exists in a state of silence. Queer non-being constructed in civil society makes it such that queer violence is not considered violence at all, contributing to their normalized death and condition of overkill.

Stanley 1 (Eric, “Near Life, Queer Death Overkill and Ontological Capture,” Social Text 107 s Vol. 29, No. 2 s Summer 2011)

The numbers, degrees, locations, kinds, types, and frequency of attacks, the statistical evidence that is [stats] meant to prove that a violation really happened, are the legitimizing measures that dictate the ways we are mandated to understand harm. However, statistics as an epistemological project may be another way in which the enormity of anti-queer is disappeared. Thinking only, or primarily, statistically about anti-queer violence is both a theoretical and a material trap. Although statistical evidence is important to make strong knowledge claims about the severity of violence, “statistics” [stats] seem to have a way of ensuring that the head of Brazell is never found. Ironically, because his head has yet to be recovered, the “actual” cause of death cannot be officially determined. Furthermore, this indeterminate cause of death bars Brazell from being entered into hate crimes statistics. Not yet dead, Brazell has never been counted as a casualty of “hate violence.”Currently the FBI, through the Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division, collects the only national data on “hate violence.” These data on hate violence (or hate crimes, as they are more commonly called) contain categories for religious, racial, and disability “bias” and anti-homosexual (male and female), anti-bisexual, and anti-heterosexual incidents (in the 2008 statistics, 2 percent of reported hate crimes were anti-heterosexual incidents, while 1.6 percent were anti-bisexual).This hate violence reporting is optional for local jurisdictions; the FBI collects no statistics on trans/gender variant incidents; and the 2008 statistics report that only ten “victims” experienced “multi-bias” incidents. The 2008 report also counted only 1,706 incidents based on “sexual orientation,” which comprised infractions ranging from vandalism to murder. It would [and reports] seem misguided at best to suggest that the number 1,706 can really tell us anything about the work of anti-queer violence. Reported attacks on “out” queer folks, such as these data, can of course only work as a swinging signifier for the incalculable referent of the actualized violence. This is not simply a numerical issue; it is a larger question of the friction between measures and effect. Not unlike the structuring lack produced by any representation that offers us, the viewers, the promise of the real, statistics can leave us with only a fragmented copy of what they might index. “Reports” on anti-queer violence, such as the “Hate Crime Statistics,” reproduce the same kinds of rhetorical loss along with the actual loss of people that *cannot be counted*. The quantitative limits of what gets to count as anti-queer violence cannot begin to apprehend the numbers of trans and queer bodies that are collected off cold pavement and highway underpasses, nameless flesh whose stories of brutality never find their way into an official account beyond a few scant notes in a police report of a body of a “man in a dress discovered.Even when a murderer is not successful and there is a survivor who could enter the act into the official record, incidents of violence are not often reported to the FBI or local police, and for good reason. The National Crime Victim Survey (NCVS) states that only about 58 percent of such incidents are ever reported; however, I would assume the percentage to be much lower.Furthermore, *“It’s War in Here”: A Report on the Treatment of Transgender and Intersex People in New York State Men’s Prisons*, a 2005 report compiled by the Sylvia Rivera Law Project, argued that the police are still one of the largest perpetrators of anti-trans, -gender-nonconforming, and -queer violence.There is a growing body of work in trans/queer critical prison studies and activism that also supports these findings.With the police or some other tentacle of the prison-industrial complex, namely the FBI, as the primary and only collection, processing, and reporting agency for such data, people’s reluctance and fear around identifying such incidents should come as no surprise

#### Black queers not only have to figure out how to survive, but they also must navigate the geography of heteronormativity in disguise to avoid being visible to violent structures.

Bailey, Marlon M. “Gender/Racial Realness: Theorizing the Gender System in Ballroom Culture.” Feminist Studies, vol. 37, no. 2, 2011, pp. 365–386., [www.jstor.org/stable/23069907](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23069907) page 373-374 KE

Femme queens, real as hell, won’t go out during the day.” Although Diva D is mostly talking about his experiences as a butch queen, he poignantly describes the rigid criteria of masculinity and gender normativity to which Black queer people are forced to adhere in order to avoid being seen in ways that subject them to persecution and violence. For men, Diva D’s comments, as well as those expressed by other ball- room members, allude to the notion that masculinity is a set of signifiers that connotes maleness within a given cultural framework. However, these definitions of masculinity change and so do their attendant signifiers. Wearing tight pants has not always been a marker of femininity or gayness. Such definitions are fluid and change as particular cultures define and redefine them. Regardless, for the Black queer people I interviewed, homophobia is embedded deeply in the shifting notions of Black masculinity and the performances thereof. These performances of Black masculinity are expressed more explicitly in certain social geographies. Hence, Black queer people in Detroit believe that they are required to perform a double labor–the work of material survival and the work of self-presentation through the performance of gender and sexual disguise–in order to negotiate and survive the rigid heteronormativity that they confront in their everyday lives.13 Most of all, Diva D signals the integral role that performance and body presentation play in the daily lives of Black queer people, irrespective of subjectivity.

#### For black bodies, the home symbolizes refuge from the constant terror from the white gaze, but white heteronormativity requires that black homes fulfill a biologically reproductive necessity that directly opposes queerness. For black queers, this “homeliness” becomes homelessness.

Bailey 13 (Marlon M. Bailey is an assistant professor of Gender Studies and American Studies at Indiana University and has received the MLA/GLQ Caucus’s Compton-Noll Prize for best article in LGBTQ Studies, “Engendering space: Ballroom culture and the spatial practice of possibility in Detroit”, 2013, A Journal of Feminist Geography, Vol. 21, No. 4, pp 495-496 //Accessed 3/6/17 GK)

Since many Black people in the USA experience and struggle against racial exclusion and oppression expressed in socio-spatial terms, home and family serve as sites of refuge, safety, and social support. For Black people, the home is represented and experienced as what hooks (1990, 41) has referred to as the ‘homeplace,’ a safe space. Homeplace is viewed as a space of shelter and refuge from and resistance against harsh urban realities to which Black people are subjected not only to race, class, and gender oppression but also to violence and exclusion. As an overcompensatory response to racist renderings of Black family formations as backward and deviant, these formations consolidate around heteropatriarchy, literally, excluding or suppressing Black gender and sexual minorities (Lubiano 1998; Johnson 2005; Bailey 2010). As a sociocultural and a material unit, the Black biological family and the home are bound together by an ideology that fetishizes the heteropatriachal nuclear family. According to Black common sense, the home is the space of reproduction and the maintenance of a (respectable) heteronormative social, gender, and sexual order (Lubiano 1998, 232). Therefore, while for some Black people the Black homeplace is a safe one, for many Black LGBT people the heteronormative home is experienced in very different – less affirming – terms. Homelessness among LGBT youth in Detroit, many of whom are Black, is a telling example of the ways in which Black LGBT people are excluded from their homeplace of origin. It is estimated that each year, 20– 40% of the 1.7 million runaway and homeless youth nationally identify as LGBT.11 In an interview I conducted with Ms Laura Hughes, Executive Director of the Ruth Ellis Center, a youth social services agency for runaway and homeless LGBT youth in Detroit, she stated that each year 2000 youth will become homeless because of their LGBT gender and sexual identities.12 Most of these LGBT youth who are homeless in Detroit are Black. And it is worth mentioning that many of the Ruth Ellis Center’s clients are LGBT members of the Ballroom community. In general, Black LGBT people are not able to rely on or have full access to these Black spaces – the home as a building and the biological family, and the heteronormative social arrangement and practices within this built environment that give it meaning. The ideology that sutures heterosexual gender and sexual norms to the Black home obscures, disciplines, and even jettisons all non-normative gender and sexual practices. Some Black LGBT people are either forced out of or choose to leave the biological homeplace. Those who remain often experience the home and biological family as coercive, as an often tacit (and other times explicit) ‘familial ultimatum’ that requires them to hide or dispense with their non-normative gender and sexual identities and practices in order to remain a full-fledged part of both the (biological) family and home (concrete building) in which this family lives. Full access to the heteropatriarchal homeplace affords one the shelter, clothing, food, and other resources that family and home are believed to provide. My research demonstrates a connection between the heteropatriarchal structure of the home (Johnston and Longhurst 2010) and how my interlocutors experience the most difficulty relating to and living with their fathers. For instance, when I interviewed Will, a Butch Queen, from the House of Ford in Detroit, he discussed his relationship with his parents, one in which he believes is influenced by his sexual identity. He explained that although he is close to his mother, he is basically estranged from his father because of his gay sexuality. Brianna, a Femme Queen free agent in the scene,13 discussed how her relationship with her father deteriorated, she believes, because she lives as a transgender woman. ‘I probably lost the relationship that I had with my father ... we were real close. It won’t be like it was,’ said Brianna. Although Will Ford and Brianna’s stories are among a diverse range of experiences that my interlocutors described, a common factor for most LGBT Ballroom members is that their relationships with their biological families suffered, negatively impacting their lives in the Black home, because of their non-conforming gender and sexual identities and practices. Thus, for Black LGBT people in Ballroom, the heteronormative space of the home – of the biological family, and of the heterogendered social and sexual relations – continually reproduces confinement, regulation, and exclusion. And for many, this space is often experienced in violent ways. For Black LGBT members of the Ballroom community, the social configuration of the house, the kinship system in the community, undertakes the labor that biological families and homes are either unwilling or unable to do. The reconfiguration of the biological familial home to the house of kinship for Ballroom members is one means through which they produce Black queer space. For instance, although there are times when, as Prada, a Butch Queen from the House of Escada notes, Ballroom houses are actual shelters for ‘those lost souls to craft14 and cohabitate,’ for most members of the community, the homeplace is a sociocultural undertaking rather than what Soja calls a ‘concrete spatiality’ (Soja 1989, 120). The house in the Ballroom community is performative in that it both exposes the ideological and fetishistic basis of the home and the biological family, [and] takes on the actual labor of social support, affirmation, and critique upon which the community depends in the ‘house.’

#### Thus I embrace the ballroom as a methodology to challenge racialized and heteronormative society in the space of the home. This uses the resolution as a starting point for the discussion of queer situation within the home space.

#### The ballroom can take many different forms; a street house, a refuge or a debate round. Reorienting comfortably discriminatory settings into a space of celebration and performance opens up the possibility of housing and comfort for marked bodies.

#### Our debating centers around a topic; 10 words, 2 months, 1 tournament for some of us. We are expected to normatively engage, give you a plantext or obey traditional structure. If we decide to rebel we become marked as ‘different’. Performance in debate becomes a micro-strategy at interrogating norms and assumptions of what is “good debate”. Our interrogation makes debate a space of comfort for bodies who find a different way to interpret the resolution and ballot. Thus the role of the ballot is to vote for the debater who best performatively challenges normative spaces.

Polson 12 “LONGING FOR THEORY:” PERFORMANCE DEBATE IN ACTION. Dana Polson, Ph.D., 2012 Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of PhD in Language, Literacy, and Culture 2012 page 18-24

Performance debate looks and sounds much different from traditional debate. It is not a traditional practice, from the presence of Black or female bodies in a majority-white, male activity (with the notable exception of the Urban Debate Leagues, or UDLs—pronounced “oodles”—which are usually filled with students of color), to the performance of rap music, poetry, and other art forms during a round, to the strong critique of white supremacy as a political system. People sometimes seem to define performance debate by its obvious formal creativity—the playing of hip hop music, for example, or the reading of narrative. Initially, this interest in form seemed less intellectual to me, as steeped in Eurocentric epistemology as I am, than the critical analysis that the practitioners perform. Kelley (2008) admonishes us, however, to pay attention to style or form in African American cultural productions, noting that it is a crucial part of understanding the art. (I will discuss this more extensively in Chapter 5). Therefore, either attempt, to highlight form or to downplay it, represents an incomplete analysis of the interplay between form, 14 content, and context. The meaning and significance of policy debate as a genre, and of performance debate as part of that genre, depends on just such an interplay of these elements of form, content, and context, according to Miller (1984, p. 159). In order to understand what performance debate is, these concepts are helpful. Burke explains content as “common sensations, concepts, images, ideas, attitudes” (ibid). Traditional debate’s content can be described as governmental policy approaches to a yearly Federal Government policy resolution (I will describe this more in Chapter 5). The substance of the debate is the arguments for and against a particular governmental policy approach to the problem implied in the resolution. The substance of the debate is imaginary in that the rhetors are pitted against each other in a staged competition; there is no actual policy about to be enacted or not. The rhetors are acting as if they were policy-makers, but obviously they are not. This as if policymaking substance of traditional debate is often rejected by performance debaters, whose substance is sometimes a critique of the beliefs and practices of policy debate itself, and sometimes a call to anti-oppressive action based on the resolution. This is the crucial determinant of performance debate. Performance debaters are not making the same sort of substantive arguments as traditional debaters are, just with different forms. Instead, there are different “concepts... ideas, attitudes” at play here. The very meat of the debate is different; they are arguing about different things. Even when performance debaters do choose to engage the resolution in some way, they avoid the as-if nature of tradition debate in favor of an ethics-based approach that they themselves believe in. They are then issuing a call to action to protest or affirm a liberatory stance. 15 Form is the symbolic representation of substance. “Form shapes the response of the reader or listener to substance by providing instruction, so to speak, about how to perceive and interpret.... seen thus, form becomes a kind of meta-information, with both semantic value (as information) and syntactic (or formal) value” (ibid). The use of musical and narrative forms in performance debate exemplifies this meta-information. The form of performance debate includes different sorts of speech within a round, such as poetry, spoken word, narrative, autobiography; it also may include live or recorded music. The form provides instruction to the listener about how to perceive and interpret the debate. In this case the breaking of debate norms signals that something different is happening: the listener should pay close attention. The artistic and narrative forms used by critical debaters are often culturally African American and so they instruct us that what we are about to hear is different from the white policy debate norm, specifically. The forms also, as information, challenge what is regarded as acceptable evidence in debate. For example, in contrast to the policy-wonk evidence often used in traditional debate (often statistic-filled work from think tanks), critical debate tends to use the work of radical, anti-racist sources, often of authors from outside the policy debate tradition such as Charles W. Mills, Tim Wise, and Molefi Assante. The musical selections are used as both form and substance, as well; they disrupt the traditional debate norms of form but also provide text used as part of the substantive ideas of the debate. Finally, situation or context is the third aspect of genre and our attempts to find meaning in genre. The context embraces content and form and “enable[s] interpretation of the action resulting from their fusion” (ibid). What is the context that enables interpretation of critical debate? I think that is a contested question. Many members of 16 the traditional debate community find critical debate “bad for debate.” Performance debate proponents might say that they are directly challenging traditional debate conventions that have become mechanistic and are inherently racist, and that debate must find new ways of becoming less exclusive and more relevant. Specifically, many debate community members such as Preston (a coach and author) suggest that traditional debate practices and pedagogy result in difficulty recruiting minority debaters. He cites Hill as having “noted that learning and communication styles of African Americans may differ from the learning and communication norms of the policy debating community” (Preston, Jr., 2006, p. 162). A call to solve this problem becomes one of the foundations of performance debate practice. Through content and form, performance debaters call for and demonstrate a practice that is inclusive and challenges the norms of the community. Reid-Brinkley quotes a Louisville debater in-round: The university of Louisville enacts a full withdrawal from the traditional norms and procedures of this debate activity. Because this institution, like every other institution in society, has also grown from the roots of racism. Seemingly neutral practices and policies have exclusionary effects on different groups for different reasons. These practices have a long and perpetuating history. (Reid-Brinkley, 2008, p. 114) Reid-Brinkley argues that many performance debate tactics are rhetorical strategies “designed to disrupt the normativity of traditional debate practices.... genre violation [is] a means of using style and performance to combat the social ideologies that result in unequal power relations across race, gender, and class within the national policy 17 debate community” (pp. 78-79). Reid-Brinkley identifies four types of genre violations in critical debate: sonic and spatial disruption, violations of strategic norms, violations of expectations regarding the resolution, and violations of the policymaker debate persona. We can see here the interplay of content, form and context in her argument. The disruptive aural presence of rap music in a debate round, for example, is not coincidental to a substantive message critiquing Eurocentric epistemology and white-normed debate practices, for example. I will discuss such genre violations much more in Chapter 5, as I explain performance debaters’ attempts to do debate rather than just talking about it [social change]. Performance debate is related to the negative Kritik arguments that take a meta- look at the resolution, with performance debaters often arguing that that the framework for the debate needs to be much wider to encompass a larger critique. For example, instead of debating a negative response to the resolution and case, a team might make a broader argument against capitalism, saying that this Kritik undergirds the resolution and related arguments and therefore must be dealt with first. Bill Shanahan, a prominent college debate coach, wrote that after 80 years of nearly unchanged policy debate framework, Kritik debating represented a new frame: “Challenging the dominant framework of interpretation known as traditional policymaking involves a reexamination of the body of debate knowledge and its structural reconstruction into a new format” (Shanahan, 2004, p. 72). He goes on to note that Kritik debating set the groundwork for non-traditional policy debate styles in general, by questioning the very topics and resolutions themselves as opposed to interpreting and affirming the topic. Initial forms of Kritik debating turned into more significant, widely used critical 18 debate styles3: “these second-generation approaches turned the early critical impulses, which originally were aimed mostly at our own debate arguments, toward the debate activity itself” (Shanahan, 2004, p. 70). Performance debate not only uses a Kritik-style approach but turns on the activity and community of policy debate itself, questioning and challenging everything from the sanctity of the resolution to the predominantly white norms of the community. This turn has occurred in actual debate rounds as part of debaters’ arguments rather than in commentary about debate; this technique has caused a great deal of consternation in some members of the community. Shanahan put it this way: “Rather than amassing a full-frontal assault on the citadel and being met with even greater reactionary force and retrenchment, transversal struggles instead tactically dispersed their resistances throughout the debate community and across rounds and tournaments, altering the very coordinates of debate’s lived realities” (Shanahan, 2004, p. 70). Among other things, performance debate arguments charge that, within the debate world, lack of diversity is not happenstance but is a result of the normative whiteness of the activity and norms and practices that actually work to exclude non-white debaters.

#### Implications:

1. Performativity outweighs any normative justifications or truth logics. Normativity breaks down rhetorical strategies into complacent norms which lacks diversity and happenstance.
2. Delinks from fairness and education voters because they try to create a form of norm setting in debate which A) excludes the performative and B) creates a form of norms & structure of how to ‘pass’ as a good debater
3. Role of the ballot challenges the assumption of ‘good debating’ meaning you have to weigh offense under the rotb to win your shell
4. Performativity justifies that all voices in the performance are important – dialogue between marginalized bodies is key to challenging dominant frameworks

#### Houses becomes sites of celebration for uncomfortable gender & sexual identities. Our 1AC serves as a reorientation of social settings to integrate and endorse the ballroom methodology as a comfortable site for nonconforming bodies.

Arnold and Bailey 09 [Constructing Home and Family: How the Ballroom Community Supports African American GLBTQ Youth in the Face of HIV/AIDS](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10538720902772006) Emily A. Arnold and Marlon M. Bailey [Journal Of Gay & Lesbian Social Services](http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/wgls20/21/2-3) Vol. 21 , Iss. 2-3,2009 page 185-186 KE

Notwithstanding the contradictions and limitations found in the ballroom community, it is a site for potentially effective and sustained interventions. Here, we offer recommendations on how to make the collaborations between CBOs and the ballroom community more effective at reducing HIV incidence rates among YAAMSM. First, CBOs should tap into the structure of ballroom culture as a net- work of support. Staff members should work with house parents to de- vise strategies for prevention within the house such as organizing special house meetings and events focused on information about sex and HIV/AIDS prevention. In many cases, members of the ballroom community are also HIV/AIDS prevention workers and therefore occupy a pivotal position to facilitate relationships between the community and the organization. Parents of houses are central to establishing prevention peer norms within the houses. Hence, we have learned that gender roles play a part in establishing the kinds of prevention work house parents do for their children, mainly because the revised gender relations within the houses shape the interaction between parents and children. Our research demonstrates that house mothers, more so than fathers, are directly involved in advising their children about sex, relationships, health, and wellbeing. Given their central roles as nurturers and providers of information regarding negotiating sexual relation- ships and encounters, prevention programs should collaborate more closely with house mothers. Working with house mothers to get their children tested and to make sure that they know the best ways to avoid HIV transmission is the best way to disseminate information among the members of the ball- room community. Fathers, on the other hand, are instrumental in helping provide children with long term goals, such as completing one’s education and seeking good employment opportunities, that can reduce vulnerability to HIV by improving the social and economic circumstances of house members. Programs that have access to employment training, GED programming, and that promote educational opportunities should collaborate more closely with house fathers to make these resources more accessible for ballroom community members. An awareness of and a commitment to work within the gendered division of labor within the houses can make linkages between CBOs and the ballroom community much more effective. The ballroom community represents a celebratory site where queer gender and sexual identities are presented, accepted, and judged, in all of their complexity. We found that the acceptance and celebration of an array of gender and sexual identities had a direct impact on how young people perceived the houses and the balls. Houses, and the people who run them, became literal and figurative homes for many of the young people we interviewed. More importantly, the houses represented a community resource that young people relied on as they not only negotiated their performances on the runway, but also as they negotiated their sexual identities, their social and sexual relationships, and their economic circumstances and opportunities. House mothers, fathers, and siblings provided a constellation of support, some of it general support, and some of it specific to HIV. These organic forms of support, information, love, and acceptance often go unnoticed by health and social service professionals, who tend to define family and home in terms of biology. We found that the houses are constructed as families for the young people in the ballroom community and the forms of intravention that take place through the houses and the balls have a profound impact on the wellbeing of ballroom community members.

#### The Performance of the 1AC is key to navigate the violent terrain of housing discrimination within the macrolevel of society for Ballroom kids.  Performance not only undergirds the gender system, but allows sexual minorities to develop mechanisms to navigate the homophobic, transphobic, and femmephobic public sphere.

Bailey, Marlon M. “Gender/Racial Realness: Theorizing the Gender System in Ballroom Culture.” Feminist Studies, vol. 37, no. 2, 2011, pp. 365–386., [www.jstor.org/stable/23069907](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23069907) page: 383-384 KE

Performance undergirds the gender identity system, the criteria for the competitive categories, and the overall social interaction between members and the roles that they play. For these reasons, I see the function of performance in ballroom culture in somewhat different terms from those in which some critics have heretofore explained it. As one example, Butler asserts in her earlier work that she is ambivalent about drag largely because it reiterates and reinscribes the same norms that it purports to subvert,25 but I argue that the performance and the gender system that it undergirds in ballroom culture offer far more cultural import because they reflect the possibilities for reconstituting gender and sexual subjectivities, for reconfiguring gender and sexual roles and relations, and for creating ways to survive an often dangerously homophobic, transphobic, and femmephobic public sphere.

Ultimately, in this queer minoritarian sphere, Black gender and sexually marginalized people forge lives worth living. Other critiques asserting that ballroom members are obsessed with white femininity and illusions of material wealth discount the actual labor in which its members are constantly engaged to create an alternative existence for themselves within their marginality. Especially with regard to gender and sexual performativity, members challenge the power and consequences of interpellation by assuming greater agency in the dialectic between subjectification and identification. The gender and sexual performativity of ballroom culture emerges and functions at the interstices of hegemony and transformation to create new forms of self-representation and social relations.

26 There is a lot to be learned about gender and sexual queerness from the ballroom community’s gender system. In the outside world, community members are required to adhere to the pervasive female/male, woman/man, hetero/homo binaries, and therefore they must behave and identify as one or the other or suffer discrimination, violence, and exclusion throughout their social lives. Even in the larger queer community, there is often an expectation for a transgender person to identify as such or for queer people to pick one of the limited categories of sexuality–lesbian, gay, or bisexual. Conversely, in the ballroom community, members can be and often are openly queer in terms of sex, gender, and sexuality; but members are understandably reluctant to make those same claims in the world outside of the ballroom sphere. I argue that these malleable, contingent, and strategic deployments of identity should not be read, necessarily, as a sign of internalized racism, homophobia, or heterosexism. Instead, these practices are strategies used by these Black queer people to negotiate and survive a sometimes perilous and complex social terrain. The performance of realness marks one cultural mechanism by which they can do so.

#### This means that only the aff is effective to create a survival mechanism for the Other in the institution; silence creates complacency under the guise of “safety” which become less safe for the marginalized in the institutions

Rodruiguez 11 (Dalia Rodriguez,2011, Qualitative Inquiry, “Silent rage and the politics of resitstance: countering seductions of whiteness and the road of politization and empowerment” https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/155f2644f681f418?projector=1 ) pg. 594

However, in addition to having critical dialogues with each other, what Whites need to understand is the need to create safe spaces for women of color to heal, and define themselves, and cope with racism. Historically, safe spaces have been “safe” because they have allowed a space for women of color to examine particular concerns that concern us (Collins, 2000). By definition, if such spaces are shared with those that are not of color, they become less safe. Recently, there were several female faculty of color who were recent hires and leaving the university. To support the initiatives supported by the administration to recruit faculty of color, I introduced the idea of creating affinity groups for female faculty of color. The reactions from White faculty members were not a surprise, but the comments were unexpected given the purpose of the committee, which was to collaboratively make social change across campus. One White faculty member said, “What you just said made me feel uncomfortable.” The words, “comments you just said made me feel uncomfortable” made me think that certainly what I had expressed bothered some people in the room. She went on to say, “I just feel like there are many White faculty that could get so much out of it too.” I understood this point, and said so in the meeting. To work toward solidarity, there certainly needs to be a dialogue between people of color and Whites. I appreciated her honesty, her willingness to disagree. This let me know that she was listening to my suggestion. It invited the “messiness” so central to making social change (Uttal, 1990). However, it was what was what said after the initial comment that reinforced how Whites can simultaneously work toward building coalitions and work to support White racism in the academy. Soon thereafter, another White faculty member said, “I’m so sick (emphasis) and tired of feeling left out. As an antiracist educator, I work and work and yet no one wants to include you.” She began getting visibly upset, and other White faculty members joined in, looking over at her to demonstrate support; one White faculty member reached her hand over, patted the self-proclaimed anti- racist educator and shook her head in agreement, and said, “I know exactly what you mean.” What most White faculty members failed to see is that by asking this question, women of color around that table were being denied the right to define self. Collins (2000) articulates it best when she says, Within this climate, African American women are increasingly asked why we want to “separate” ourselves from Black men and why feminism cannot speak for all women, including us. In essence, these queries challenge the need for distinctive Black women’s communities as political entities. (p. 110) Collins explains that one of the reasons that safe spaces are so threatening to those who feel excluded is because these spaces are free of surveillance by more powerful groups. These safe spaces offer the conditions for women of color to self-define, becoming the foundation for a politicized standpoint, affecting the organization of women of color and going beyond simply the expression of voice. It became very clear to me that I was simply done with my concern—not because I didn’t think the issue was critical for us to consider, but because most White faculty members had already made up their minds about the proposal on the table. Feeling dismissed and unheard, I sat in silence. It is often in these moments that women of color retreat to silence, as our spoken words remain unheard, and many times our words are rejected or deemed as “hopeless” and doing nothing to create social change. However, I also feel the need to question why else I chose to remain silent. Like Montoya eloquently explains, as women of color, we most often have been trained to remain silent, even during moments of intense emotion. As Montoya (2000) argues, In retrospect, I was silent because I had been well- trained, even in situations of intense emotions. I read the signals around me; I knew how to act—I knew to be silent. (p. 25) While women’s silences are often coerced (Houston & Kramarae, 1991), we have also been socialized to remain silent, (Montoya, 2000), especially in the academy. The implications of remaining silent for women of color can be detrimental for the survival of women of color in the academy. Remaining silent may lead to becoming invisible, and can be the death of us in many ways—spiritually, emotion- ally, and professionally. Voice and visibility go hand in hand in the demonstration of competence for women of color (Alfred, 2001), especially in the academy. For example, although women of color are rendered invisible by virtue of their femaleness and their race, successful female faculty of color who can get the dominant group to listen to her voice will increase her visibility among the group. In the educational context, visibility is critical for women of color during the graduate school and tenure-track process. Moreover, in the White academy, a place that often serves to silence women of color, voicing oneself may also serve as a form of comfort, if not inspiration to other women of color who have been similarly silenced (Williams, 2001). We can begin to convince ourselves that remaining silent is actually a good thing. hooks (1995) argues that part of the colonizing process has been teaching folks of color to repress our rage, to never make Whites the targets of any anger we feel about racism. She argues that most folks of color have internalized this message and it is this internalization of victimization that renders folks of color power- less. The repression of rage (if and when we feel it) and silencing the rage of other Black people (and other people of color) are the sacrificial offering we make to gain the ear of White listeners. Remaining silent can also make one complacent—perhaps even momentarily convincing our- selves that everything is ok, and even dismissing any signs of racism that may occur in front of us, to us, and to those around us. This is the result of the White supremacist world we live in and reflective of how people of color continue to be colonized in the White academy.